

## WHY IS THE CITY MAKING THESE CHANGES?

- Parking is important to residents and businesses alike, but it's a scarce resource and growing scarcer.
- As a matter of equity, people who live in Somerville should register their cars in Somerville and pay excise taxes to the City.
- Two-thirds of the city already enjoys the benefits of permit parking, and Somerville is seeing more commuters and non-residents parking on our streets not to shop, dine or visit, but to commute – a problem that will only worsen with the coming of the Green Line Extension.
- Parking studies – including a study done here in Somerville – show that better pricing and demand management can actually increase the number of spaces available for business and entertainment-related parking at the times they are most needed.
- Even after cutting dollars and personnel, and asking many employees and all retirees to pay a greater share of their healthcare costs, the city needs the extra annual revenue – about \$1.75 million – that comes from managing parking resources more efficiently.

## WHO MADE THESE PROPOSALS IN THE FIRST PLACE?

- There were two principal sources for these policy recommendations:
  1. The May 2009 Report of the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC), a special panel convened by Mayor Curtatone to help the City develop a plan to cope with deep, unexpected cuts in state aid. Among their many recommendations, the FAC called upon the City to “Implement city-wide residential permit parking” and “Increase rates and extend hours of operations for metered parking.”
  2. An independent 2008 study conducted by local planner and parking specialist Mark Chase with assistance from Tufts University students, recommending that public parking spaces in the city be re-priced by location and time of day “to insure that there’s always some parking available – roughly that one in every seven spaces is free.”
  - 3.

*Copies of these reports are available on the Parking Policy Changes web page of the City’s website,  
[www.somervillema.gov](http://www.somervillema.gov)*

## WHAT IS THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION?

- The Traffic Commission is the 5-member regulatory body that determines all traffic and parking regulations in the City of Somerville. Its authority is based on enabling legislation from Massachusetts’ General Laws and the City of Somerville Charter. The Traffic & Parking Department serves as its staff and manages the records and the regulations.
- The Commission is chaired by the Commissioner of Public Works. The other members of the Commission are: a representative of the Police Chief; a representative of the Fire Chief; the Chair of the Board of Aldermen’s Subcommittee on Traffic & Parking; and a citizen-at-large appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Aldermen.

## WHAT IS THE TRAFFIC BOARD?

- The Traffic Board is 3-member review panel with the authority to review, approve or reject actions of the Traffic Commission. The Traffic Board convenes to review any public petitions submitted in challenge of Traffic Commission actions and policies.

## WHAT IS THE PARKING SOLUTIONS TASK FORCE?

- In response to questions and concerns over proposed parking changes, Mayor Curtatone convened an advisory body consisting of local business leaders, elected officials, city officials and residents to advise on the implementation of the new rules. The Task Force created a set of recommendations and a multiphase implementation plan. Copies of the Task Force report may be found on the Somerville website.

**For more information, please call 311 or  
visit the City’s website at  
[www.somervillema.gov](http://www.somervillema.gov)**

CITY OF  
SOMERVILLE



# Parking Regulations Fact Sheet



ONE CALL to CITY HALL  
**311**  
SOMERVILLE

CITY OF SOMERVILLE

Dear Fellow Resident:

Over the month of July, you may have noticed that parking meter rates went up to \$1.00 per hour throughout the city. The hours changed, too – meters used to run until 8 p.m. only in the Davis Sq. public lots, but the hours are now the same everywhere.

\$1.00 per hour is increasingly the standard rate in the Boston area. Because of deep cuts in state local aid, we have reduced our spending by \$4 million this year. By cutting salaries, increasing health care contributions, leaving vacancies unfilled and making targeted cuts in many areas of city spending, we've kept layoffs and service cuts to an absolute minimum, but we need the added revenue to avoid reductions in core services.

This fall, we will also begin implementation of citywide resident permit parking. 2/3 of the city already has permit parking, which has functioned well as a way to ensure that residents have a place to park. As the number of cars continues to grow in our congested city, we can no longer afford to allow residents to park their cars here but register them somewhere else.

To make sure that these changes go smoothly, and that businesses, communities of faith, shoppers, diners, residents and all other stakeholders have convenient and reliable access to the parking they need, we have created a Parking Solutions Task Force to come up with customized parking solutions that use common sense and the latest technology to keep our city moving.

This brochure explains how our new policies work, and how Somerville, our All America City, will continue to adopt new technologies and best practices to make the most of our scarce and valuable parking resources.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Curtatone  
Mayor



### WHAT'S CHANGING WITH SOMERVILLE PARKING?

- The price of metered parking has gone to \$1/hour, and meters are in operation from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Somerville is moving this fall to extend resident permit parking – already in place for 2/3s of streets – to the entire city except main thoroughfares
- Later this year, parking kiosks that accept credit and debit cards and city ParkCards will be installed in several heavily used locations

### HOW DO THESE CHANGES AFFECT RESIDENTS?

- For most residents, the only change will be higher rates when using parking meters. (NOTE: over 75% of Somerville's metered parking is used by non-residents.)
- Residents who live on non-permitted streets will need to get parking stickers for their cars and visitor permits for their visitors, but they will also be able to park on a much wider range of streets – the new permits are good in any legal, non-metered space in the city.

#### **As always:**

- Residents on permitted streets can get \$1 special event permits for large parties.
- Residents can purchase ParkCards at the Office of Traffic and Parking (133 Holland Street) and City Hall (93 Highland Ave) – and coming soon to local merchants. ParkCards are rechargeable and work in every meter in the city. Best of all, they allow parkers to reclaim the unused portion of their time when they leave, so you pay only for the time you actually use.
- Contractors who work in Somerville can receive a parking permit to park at homes while doing work for residents (but if a contractor receives a ticket while doing work in a residential neighborhood, residents are not liable.)

### HOW DO THESE CHANGES AFFECT BUSINESSES?

- Customers *will* pay more for parking, but will also have access to more parking spaces at more times of day.
- Through new "second shift" business permits and extended day business permits, employees and business owners (including artists who rent loft or studio space in Somerville) will have access to parking without competing for the metered and unpermitted spaces their customers need.
- With many main thoroughfares continuing to stay outside resident permit parking rules from 8 a.m. to 2:30 a.m., there will be plenty of day and evening parking for customers and visitors to businesses outside our business districts.

### WHAT ABOUT BUSINESSES, NON-PROFIT ARTS GROUPS, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

- Traffic and Parking personnel will develop special signage, permits, metering or other solutions to assist organizations that are open early, or operate only occasionally or at unusual times. Any individual or group falling into this category, including communities of faith (churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, etc.) should call 311 for more information and meet with T&P officials.

### WHAT ARE "MAIN THOROUGHFARES" AND HOW ARE THEIR PARKING REGULATIONS DIFFERENT?

- The City plans to have 18 major streets designated as "Resident Permit Parking Only between 2:30 am and 8:00 a.m. with non-permitted 2 hour parking and unrestricted permit parking during other times. During business hours these streets will keep the same parking rules they currently have and provide curbside parking for visitors and customers. (For a full street list, call 311, or visit our website, [www.somervillema.gov](http://www.somervillema.gov).)